UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1995/80
3 July 1995
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/SPANISH

Substantive session of 1995
Geneva, 26 June-28 July 1995
Agenda item 5 (e)

SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS:
REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND
RELATED QUESTIONS: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Report of the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on its fifteenth session

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I. MATTERS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

1. At its fifteenth session, the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) reviewed the work accomplished by the Institute during the first term of the biennium 1994-1995, and gave special attention to the preparation of INSTRAW's participation at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

2. The attention of the Economic and Social Council is drawn to the Board's conclusions concerning the overall programme of action for INSTRAW (Part II) and concerning operational and budgetary issues (Part VIII).

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 1994: PROGRESS REPORT ON THE INSTITUTE WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

3. In considering this agenda item, the Acting Director explained that documents INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.2 and INSTRAW/BT/1995/INF/2/Add.1 reflected the work programme of INSTRAW which was already in progress when she joined the Institute. She considered it appropriate that each staff member directly in charge of corresponding programme elements should present to the Board the work accomplished during the period. In addressing the first part of the document the Acting Director summarized INSTRAW's participation in the regional preparatory conferences for the Fourth World Conference for Women. In this regard, it was noted that substantive contributions were presented and INSTRAW publications and materials were distributed.

1. Participation at the regional preparatory process

4. The first regional preparatory conference (second Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development, 7 June 1994) was convened by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The INSTRAW staff member who attended the meeting briefly described the themes presented that had direct relevance to the work of INSTRAW. The need for statistical data that reflected the migration of women and the development of statistical methods for measuring and valuing unpaid work were among the important issues for which INSTRAW could provide insights due to the work carried out on those topics. Possibilities for collaboration with ESCAP were being explored.

5. The Acting Director then presented INSTRAW's participation in the second regional preparatory conference (Sixth Regional Preparatory Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of the Latin American and Caribbean Region, 20-25 September 1994), held by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). She expressed the view that one of the major issues at that Conference was the invisibility of women's contribution to national economies and the non-inclusion of the informal sector, in which women have significant participation, in the System of National Accounts. INSTRAW's work could help to define indicators that would determine women's needs and ways of distributing resources.

6. The third regional preparatory conference (High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting of the Economic Commission for Europe, 17-21 October 1994) was convened by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). The Acting Director noted the four major points highlighted: (a) the situation of aging populations; (b) the erosion of social networks; (c) the situation of women in transitional economies and how the social, economic and political changes are affecting them; and (d) the special situation of widows. During that conference, INSTRAW focal points held an informal meeting at which it was decided that four focal points (Canada, Cuba, Italy and Sri Lanka) would be invited to attend the 1995 meeting of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees as observers. For varying reasons, only the focal point from Cuba was able to attend.

7. The fourth regional preparatory conference (Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting, 9-10 November 1994) in the region of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) was attended by INSTRAW's focal point in Italy. The Director informed the Board that, initially, the Institute had intended to organize, in collaboration with ESCWA, a subregional seminar on assessment of the research and training needs of Arab women in the ESCWA and ECA regions, prior to the regional preparatory conference. However, owing to logistical problems, it was decided by both organizations to postpone the seminar to a later stage.

8. The fifth regional preparatory meeting (Fifth African Regional Conference on Women, 16-23 November 1994), in the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) region was attended by the Acting Director and one staff member who informed the Board of the main elements of the Conference and INSTRAW's contributions to this event. She noted that there was a serious need to translate INSTRAW publications into other languages of the region. Regarding the African Platform for Action, emphasis was placed on education for women, including environmental education and gender development. These issues were stated in various resolutions. The non-governmental organization's Plan of Action emphasized the need to strengthen non-governmental organizations and to sustain closer partnership with Governments and development agencies. The Plan also highlighted the need for a freer press that could contribute to women's education. The forum decided that the Plan of Action should include girls and young women in its consideration, and that young men should also be an active part of the gender and social and economic discussions.

9. The representatives of ECLAC and ECA reiterated the importance of maintaining collaboration and interaction between INSTRAW and the regional commissions. In this connection the representative of ECA proposed to formalize a process of designing joint programmes between INSTRAW and each regional commission. She pointed out that INSTRAW's research was related to the African Platform for Action and could be transferred into concrete actions and strategies for the advancement of women. The representative of ECLAC pointed out that, although cooperation between INSTRAW and the regional commission had no formalized system, a number of successful joint ventures had been undertaken in the past.

10. The Acting Director welcomed the interventions by the representatives of the two regional commissions and highlighted the need for future cooperation and implementation of various regional plans and platforms for action. She pointed

out that financial considerations for the joint programming and priorities should be established for each region.

11. The Acting Director informed the Board on INSTRAW's participation in various United Nations ad hoc inter-agency meetings in view of establishing better coordination among agencies.

2. Presentation of progress report

Preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women

12. The Acting Director informed the meeting that INSTRAW was currently preparing two special activities for the Conference, one addressing aspects of natural resources, and the other, on empowerment of women. For the non-governmental organization Forum, INSTRAW was currently organizing four panels on the following subjects: (a) communications for women in development: strategies for a global reach; (b) measurement and valuation of unpaid work using time-use data; (c) women, water and environmental sanitation; and (d) economic and political empowerment of women. The staff members responsible for the organization of each panel gave a brief description of its focus and objective.

13. The Acting Director introduced the report contained in document INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.2 on the implementation of the research and training programmes and requested respective staff members to provide in-depth explanations of the work accomplished.

Political and economic empowerment

14. Under the subprogramme on empowerment of women, the outputs of the project on gender impact analysis of credit projects were described. It was also explained that while an additional booklet for the Gender Training Portfolio on women's human rights had been proposed, it was decided not to produce the booklet. One of the reasons given for the decision was the inability to find a unique treatment of the subject since so many other institutions and agencies, both within and outside the United Nations system, were currently publishing documents on it. In that context, the representative of the International Training Centre of the ILO informed the Board that an information kit and package on "Women and workers' rights" had been prepared by their Centre in cooperation with the ILO, which contained a pocket guide on all resolutions and conventions related to women's rights, including posters and video. In 1994, a pocket guide on women and human rights was also produced by the Centre in cooperation with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights.

15. The final manuscript of a booklet entitled "Gender concepts in development planning", containing some reflections on the word-concept of "gender" and its research, with an approach that examines the roles of women and men in society, was briefly presented and distributed to the Board. Publication is scheduled for September 1995. A Board member referred to the debate surrounding the term "equality" that had transpired at the Second Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development, held in Jakarta in June 1994. He informed the Board

that owing to "varying opinions on how to define the status and ultimate end of equality", the Indonesian delegation had proposed to translate the term into "harmonious gender partnership for mutual benefit for women and men". It was stressed by the Board, however, that since the term "equality" was one of the three major themes of the Fourth World Conference on Women, INSTRAW should also maintain the word "equality".

16. A Board member reiterated the need for INSTRAW to carry out activities on that topic, also in the Arab States and the Middle East.

Women, statistics and indicators

17. The main outputs and ongoing activities under the subprogramme on statistics and indicators on gender issues were also presented.

18. The continuing collaboration with the Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat, other United Nations agencies and the regional commissions was mentioned. It was also emphasized that INSTRAW would be acknowledged as one of the major sponsors of the second edition of the World's Women which was currently being prepared in time for the Fourth World Conference on Women.

19. It was brought to the attention of the Board that several requests from countries in the European region had been received to organize subregional workshops on gender statistics. The idea was supported by the Board members who emphasized the importance of convening such a group for countries with economies in transition, particularly for those that belonged to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

20. It was reported that pertinent publications would be presented to the Fourth World Conference on Women entitled as follows: "The migration of women: methodological issues in the measurement and analysis of internal and international migration"; "Measurement and valuation of the unpaid contribution: accounting through time and output"; "Credit for women: why is it important?"; "Analysis of the impact of credit projects on women micro-entrepreneurs".

Women and environment

21. Under the subprogramme on women, environment and sustainable development, it was reported to the Board that the substantive outputs for the period under review were completed successfully.

22. Three national training seminars on women, water supply and sanitation were conducted: 1/ in Namibia, with an attendance of 34 participants; in Guyana, with an attendance of 40 participants; and in Ecuador, with an attendance of 48 participants. The seminars were completed successfully. The training package on women, water supply and sanitation was translated into Spanish, in-house. The national focal point in Ecuador later organized five follow-up training seminars in that country, with 154 participants.

23. The modular training package, Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development, prepared by INSTRAW between 1994 and 1995 in cooperation with the International Training Centre of the ILO, was presented to the Board by the staff member in charge and the representative of the ILO. It was recommended that a training seminar should be organized in 1995 in countries with economies in transition to present the new training package (see also paras. 151-152).

24. The system of reporting and the cooperation between INSTRAW and the United Nations system in the area of women, water, renewable energy and sustainable development, was brought to the attention of the Board. INSTRAW's unique mandate in this area emphasized the need to strengthen further activities of coordination within the United Nations system regarding these topics. The Board ratified that INSTRAW should report to the Second Committee of the General Assembly on these items.

25. The need to update the training packages on: "Women, water supply and sanitation", and on "Women and renewable sources of energy", was brought to the attention of the Board, which recommended that funds for that purpose should be allocated.

26. The President of the Board, and some of its members, requested clarification on the evaluation of various INSTRAW training seminars. It was pointed out that three types of evaluations were carried out: prior, during and after activities. However, the need for follow-up and systematic evaluation of INSTRAW training seminars should become a regular component of all subprogrammes, for which appropriate budgetary allocations should be provided.

27. The need to allocate funds for follow-up activities upon completion of training seminars was also raised by the Board members.

Communications for women in development

28. The outputs of the special project "Development of Communications Materials for Women in Development", funded by the Government of Italy, including programmes in Argentina, Colombia and the Dominican Republic, were reported to the Board. The President of the Board sought clarification on the specific outputs of this project, particularly on the comparative results or parallel findings emerging from the case studies that were conducted in those three countries. The staff member responsible for the projects stated that in relation to the portrayal of women in the media, all countries had some alternative media seeking to portray women in a fairer manner. However, there was a gap between the way mass media portrayed women in general, and women's concerns and needs as members of any given society.

29. The Acting Director informed the Board that the activities of the Information, Communication and Documentation Unit were temporarily being performed by staff members who actually belonged to the Research and Training Unit, in view of the fact that the key posts of the former unit were currently vacant. A staff member was requested to describe the activities being carried out in that unit, particularly those that pertained to the preparation of inputs to the Fourth World Conference on Women. The staff member mentioned a list of

publications, booklets, flyers and brochures that had been prepared or were currently under preparation.

30. In addition, the staff member mentioned the preparation of the forthcoming INSTRAW News. The Board members noted the change of the subscription price for INSTRAW News and supported the decision made by the Acting Director to allocate a price to some publications and to raise the subscriptions' price to cover production and the mailing costs. The Board recommended that additional marketing options be established to further promote and disseminate INSTRAW's work and publications.

31. The staff member in charge of publishing commented briefly on the performance of the printing shop during the period, and described the present conditions of the equipment and facilities. She mentioned that despite the existing limited capacity and condition of the printing shop, a total number of approximately 1 million pages had been printed and approximately 140,000 pages were photocopied. She also informed on the dissemination of the publications and stated that the Institute was grateful to the regional commissions for their assistance in distributing INSTRAW News in their respective regions, particularly ECA, ESCAP and ESCWA. The Board members recommended that an updated list of INSTRAW's publications and other materials should be produced and regularly sent to focal points as well as to research centres and interested non-governmental organizations.

32. The Board members commended INSTRAW's staff for having provided the services required from the Unit despite the conditions described, and for having produced documents of good quality. They also reiterated that financial resources were indeed necessary to upgrade the facilities and condition of the Unit.

33. The Board recommended that INSTRAW's public information materials and substantive reports should be translated into different languages and disseminated world wide. A Board member expressed the need to make INSTRAW's programmes more visible through intensive public information campaigns, particularly using television and videos. The Acting Director explained that certain outputs had not been achieved owing to the structural and internal problems of the Information, Communication and Documentation Unit.

Cooperation with the regional commissions and with the United Nations system

34. The representatives of ECLAC and ECA expressed their concern that the progress report did not contain any specific mention of cooperation between INSTRAW and the regional commissions. They reiterated the importance of maintaining, expanding and strengthening such collaboration and interaction.

35. The representative of ECLAC stated that at present, INSTRAW was experiencing a turning point, therefore its cooperation with the regional commissions required some analysis so that INSTRAW could significantly contribute to the regional work that was taking place; by the same token, the regional commissions could provide support to INSTRAW's activities, based on their knowledge of their specific regional conditions, and the regional institutions dealing with the relevant subjects. She mentioned that at present,

taking advantage of the momentum, the Board might wish to recommend substantive aspects in which the regional commissions and INSTRAW could cooperate to project a better vision of its future after the Conference, which would be a very important departing point.

36. The representative of ECA stated that it had found INSTRAW research and training activities very relevant to the work ECA was carrying out at the regional level. She stated that sometimes it was not clear whether the formal collaboration between ECA and INSTRAW was on an ad hoc basis or was a more formal relationship. She proposed to elaborate a formal process of consultations in terms of drawing up programmes for each biennium, so that when INSTRAW selected the priority areas of concentration by region, the choice could be made by direct consultations between the region and INSTRAW itself. She observed that the programme of action for 1996-1997 for the African region was drawn from the African Platform for Action. Therefore, INSTRAW could reflect on these recommendations for research projects, particularly by converting the results of the research into strategies for plans of action.

37. The Acting Director welcomed the interventions by the representatives of the two regional commissions and highlighted the need for clear guidelines for future cooperation and implementation of various recommendations contained in the regional plans of action. She pointed out that INSTRAW's priorities for each region should be established in a comprehensive and coordinated form, with adequate consideration given to the financial requirements. She stated that the progress report did not contain complete considerations on cooperation schemes with the regional commissions owing to (a) the incertitude that had affected the activities of the Institute, (b) the lack of progress in the deliberations about institutional arrangements at the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, as well as (c) the lack of time in the preparation of the progress report.

38. Some Board members reiterated their concern that no information or mechanisms for coordination and development of the Institute's programmes with the regional commissions were contained in the report. In order to avoid duplications of work, as well as for financial and political reasons, the Board recommended the need for strengthening coordination between INSTRAW, the regional commissions, the United Nations system, academic institutions and agencies, etc.

39. The Acting Director concurred with the recommendations made by the Board on the need to prepare guidelines and institutional mechanisms for INSTRAW's future work with the United Nations system and other institutions.

40. A Board member pointed out that INSTRAW should not limit its cooperation to other United Nations agencies, but should also establish contacts and benefit from the research and training done by academic and research institutions. She pointed out that INSTRAW should continue conducting its research and training activities world wide, as well as carry out its interregional cooperation.

41. The analysis of the cooperation between INSTRAW, the regional commissions and the United Nations system provided ground for the Acting Director to bring to the attention of the Board INSTRAW's reporting system to the Economic and

Social Council and the General Assembly, particularly on INSTRAW's major chapters: women and environment, water, sanitation, waste management, natural resources, renewable energy, areas in which INSTRAW had a unique mandate; or those pertaining to the realm of political and economic empowerment, statistics and indicators, migration and resettlements (HABITAT), that were part of the agenda of the Second Committee.

42. The Board recommended that INSTRAW report to the Second Committee of the General Assembly on those items and to the Third Committee on the corresponding ones and that INSTRAW should continue its coordination activities within those subprogramme areas.

43. It was reiterated by the Board that the evaluation and follow-up of INSTRAW's work in various areas should become a regular component of the programmes. To this effect, the President informed the Board of the intention of the Government of the Netherlands to commission an external assessment or evaluation of INSTRAW's current state of affairs.

44. The Board recommended that the general guidelines for the next work programme should be defined. Furthermore, the Board also recommended that future Board meetings should be organized prior to the beginning of the following biennium and in advance of the Council's regular session, in order to have the report adopted by the General Assembly.

45. In conclusion, the Board members congratulated the Acting Director and highly commended the staff members for demonstrating their commitment to the Institute's work given the special situation of the Institute during the period under review. They particularly praised the way the report was presented by the Acting Director and the opportunity she had given the staff members to inform on the implementation of their corresponding programmes. It was decided that this innovative and substantive mode of reporting should be maintained as a permanent way of presenting the progress report in future Board sessions.

3. Conclusions

46. The Board stressed that INSTRAW should retain its original mandate and a distinct capacity to carry out research and training for the advancement of women as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 3520 (XXX) of 15 December 1975.

47. The Board emphasized that systematic evaluation, monitoring and follow-up of the work of INSTRAW would be regularly implemented following the guidelines and procedures enunciated by the Strategic Planning Committee.

48. The Board decided that the Strategic Planning Committee would convene immediately after the Fourth World Conference on Women, which was scheduled to take place on 4-15 September in Beijing.

49. The Board decided that INSTRAW should continue its work and establish priorities in areas where the Institute had already acquired valuable research and training expertise. These included: empowerment of women as an overall

concept; mass media; statistics and indicators on gender issues; natural resources and sustainable development: water, waste management and sanitation; renewable energy; and issues related to different groups of female population such as the ageing, displaced; refugees and migrants.

50. The Board decided that INSTRAW should introduce the following in its new programme, among other subjects:

(a) Activities geared at implementing the recommendations emanating from the Fourth World Conference on Women, specially those related to research and training needs for the advancement of women;

(b) Expansion of the inventory of research and training programmes carried out for women, within and outside the United Nations system;

(c) Greater interaction and collaboration between donors, agencies and relevant institutions in the field of research and training;

(d) Effective coordination with United Nations agencies to avoid duplication and enhance INSTRAW's research and training comparative advantages on women's issues;

(e) Networking and coordinating mechanisms for future collaboration and follow-up programmes between agencies.

51. The Board recommended that INSTRAW's report should also be considered under the relevant items of the Second Committee, in order to improve the coordination and synergy of its programmes with other economic and social issues.

52. After careful examination, the Board approved INSTRAW's preparatory activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women, and decided to request the Secretary-General of the Conference to include, among the official documentation to be disseminated at the Conference, background information on INSTRAW portraying its past, present and new priorities.

53. The Board endorsed INSTRAW's delegation to the Conference, composed of the President of the Board, the Acting Director and at least three staff members, subject to relevant directives. The Board also endorsed on the same basis INSTRAW's participation in the non-governmental organizations' Forum on Women, with two staff members for each of the four panels that INSTRAW will be conducting at the Forum. The joint participation of INSTRAW and the Department for Development Support and Management Services in some of the activities was also endorsed, as well as in relation to the logistical arrangements to ensure appropriate participation. In addition, qualified interns might also form part of the delegation at their own initiative and expense.

54. The Board also decided that close attention should be paid to critical areas of concern as defined in the Platform for Action to be adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, as well as the regional plans/platforms for action.

55. As one of the activities for implementing such objectives, the Board endorsed the proposal that INSTRAW should convene an international meeting on research and training on gender issues in the first half of 1996.

56. The Board welcomed the strengthening relations and cooperation between INSTRAW and the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization aimed at expanding and regularizing joint training programmes. In this context, the Board noted with appreciation the invitation of the International Training Centre of the ILO to host international meetings on research and training on gender related issues, the preparations for which would be undertaken jointly by INSTRAW and the Centre.

57. The Board considered that linkages and collaboration between INSTRAW and the regional commissions should be strengthened and enhanced. The Board recommended that INSTRAW expand its training programmes to include more regions in its current programmes and enhance interregional activities on gender-related issues.

58. The Board advised the Acting Director to undertake preparatory activities to facilitate INSTRAW's substantive participation at the forthcoming United Nations international conferences and events, including the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in 1996, and the International Year of the Elderly Persons in 1999.

59. The Board reiterated that INSTRAW should continue and improve the scope of its cooperation with other United Nations agencies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the United Nations Institute for Social Development (UNRISD); the United Nations University (UNU); and others.

60. The Board stressed the importance of developing effective communication mechanisms between the focal points and INSTRAW and encouraged the Institute to develop a more balanced system of establishing focal points as well as correspondents, whenever required, in all regions, in accordance with its Statute. Modalities would be studied to allow flexibility and active participation of focal points for greater effectiveness at regional and interregional interaction.

61. The Board welcomed the new form of reporting introduced by the Acting Director and encouraged her to adopt it as a regular procedure for the forthcoming sessions.

III. THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

A. Draft Platform for Action

62. When considering this agenda item, the Board had before it documents INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.4, INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.4/Add.1, INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.4/Add.2, INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.4/Add.3; a copy of the draft Platform for Action; and United Nations press releases WOM/833 and 834 of 6 and 10 April 1995.

63. A Board member recalled that at the last session of the Board, note was taken of the five regional conferences to be held in 1994, the process to follow towards the Fourth World Conference on Women and the preparation of the Platform for Action. She also referred to the fact that each regional conference had adopted a regional plan or platform for action, on the basis of which, the secretariat of the Fourth World Conference on Women had prepared the draft Platform for Action to be adopted at the Conference and which was discussed at the recently concluded thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

64. Regarding the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which she had attended as a member of the delegation of her country, and upon the request of the President, the same Board member, gave the Board a thorough background of the discussions that had taken place on the draft Platform for Action. She pointed out that the draft Platform had been adopted with a considerable number of paragraphs (approximately 60 per cent) kept in brackets, implying that no consensus was reached on those issues. In particular, she brought to the attention of the Board, the paragraphs and discussions relevant to INSTRAW and UNIFEM under the chapter on institutional arrangements, and the paragraphs pertaining to the financial arrangements proposed in the draft Platform for Action.

65. The Acting Director was requested to introduce document INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.4, which provides an overview of the various research and training needs of issues related to women and a proposal for convening an international conference on research and training on gender issues. The Acting Director emphasized that the proposal was at its very preliminary stage, the details of which would be further defined. The Board endorsed the proposal, recognizing that paragraph 231 of the draft Platform for Action already stipulated that "INSTRAW should develop networks of research institutions and serve as a focal point for gender training in the United Nations system as a whole within its field of competence".

66. The representative of ECA suggested that the initiative should be presented as a concrete proposal to the Fourth World Conference on Women. This proposal was endorsed by the Board.

67. Taking into account the number of agencies, institutions and universities that deal with research and training on women and gender issues, as well as the critical time factor, the following recommendations were also forwarded:

(a) To organize an international conference limited to the agencies that dealt with research and training on women's issues in order to properly coordinate the activities and programme priorities. The urgency of convening such a conference was emphasized. It was considered that it should not be postponed, and preferably it should be conducted in the first half of 1996;

(b) To organize seminars and workshops for other research institutions, universities and individual researchers and experts to discuss specific research and training projects or activities on women or gender issues world wide.

68. Current debates surrounding the concept of gender were also raised particularly in view of the different meanings of "gender" as a word and a term when translated into different languages. A Board member mentioned that the issue was debated at the recent session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The Commission had decided to organize a "contact group" that would meet from 15 May to 15 June 1995 to propose a list of definition of terms, terminology and possible glossary on gender and other emerging words that referred to the social and economic sectors. An INSTRAW staff member was requested to make a brief description of the research that the Institute had carried out in this area.

69. Regarding the emerging definitions of concepts and terms dealing with the advancement of women in the social, economic, political and cultural sectors, the Acting Director stated that INSTRAW would prepare a glossary of related emerging gender terms.

70. The Board also suggested that INSTRAW should explore the possibility of co-sponsoring the proposed conferences and meetings with other institutions or agencies. It was also recommended that if possible INSTRAW could organize such conferences on a more regular basis, annually or every two years.

B. Follow-up action

71. The Acting Director explained that the purpose of agenda item 8 (a) was to provide the Board with elements that could facilitate identification of the main priorities for INSTRAW's work programme, based on substantive General Assembly resolutions and the outcomes of main United Nations conventions and conferences. Complementary information on priorities defined in the regional plans and platforms for action were also reflected in document INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.5.

72. She emphasized that the work of INSTRAW for the next biennium should take into account the salient elements and outputs that had emanated from the recent United Nations international conferences and major conventions, with special attention to the concrete comments provided by the Board in its deliberations.

73. The President of the Board remarked that INSTRAW should concentrate on women and women's problems but not in isolation from mainstream developmental problems. The Institute should identify its priorities and provide inputs on various aspects of policy-making affecting women. She stressed that setting priorities was urgent, owing to the fact that an increasing number of women lived in critical conditions. She indicated that Agenda 21 was a very useful document although it concentrated on environment, but INSTRAW had developed strength and expertise in certain areas, such as water and sanitation, and should continue to work in those areas. She also recognized INSTRAW's strength on gender statistics and further emphasized that the Institute should reinforce work on those issues in which it had a unique role, such as the work on ageing women. She stated that INSTRAW should also contribute to the definition of concepts and reiterated that duplication should be avoided. Contacts with relevant agencies and institutions should be reinforced in order to identify research and training needs. The President suggested that INSTRAW should reinforce collaboration with research institutions such as UNRISD.

74. In continuing the deliberations, a Board member mentioned that the Vienna Declaration addressed issues that were directly relevant to INSTRAW's work, and suggested that INSTRAW should also concentrate its efforts and resources on women and family issues. A Board member said that INSTRAW needed to limit its work programme and give priority to concrete women's issues. Another Board member added that while it was true that INSTRAW's scope of work should be delimited and viable, there were issues, such as water, in which women were very much involved and in which INSTRAW had played a crucial role. She pointed out that INSTRAW had already extensive knowledge and experience on this issue which had to be exploited, given the importance of water scarcity envisaged for the future.

75. Another Board member referred to the importance of providing equal attention and resources to the issue of empowerment of women, of which she acknowledged, environment was also a source. She also inquired on the extent of collaboration and consultations between INSTRAW and other United Nations agencies such as the Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat in the area of gender statistics.

76. The representative of the Government of the host country informed the Board that on 20 April, the Commission for Social Development had approved a resolution on the celebration of 1999 as the International Year of Elderly Persons. In this resolution, INSTRAW was invited to continue its research work on ageing women in accordance with the recommendations to be adopted in Beijing. She commented that INSTRAW's publication on elderly women was welcomed and positively received in the Vienna Forum on Women in October 1994. She also added, that the term "elderly women" should be substituted for "older women". The President of the Board also acknowledged the popularity of INSTRAW's publication on elderly women and expressed that INSTRAW should continue to prepare similar materials.

77. The representative of ECLAC indicated that the document prepared for this agenda item could facilitate the preparation of a mid-term working plan. However, she cautioned that INSTRAW should coordinate its work with the regional commissions and other agencies in order to avoid duplication and to determine specific subregional priorities. As some of the areas identified in the regional plans were common, the possibility for more interregional activities should be explored. The Acting Director concurred in these observations and reiterated the importance of converting areas of common interest into collaborative accords between agencies. The role of INSTRAW to act as a catalyst between Governments, institutions, research entities and non-governmental organizations was crucial.

78. The representative of UNICEF expressed its satisfaction with the positive collaboration in the past decade between INSTRAW and UNICEF in the area of women, water supply and sanitation, and confirmed UNICEF's commitment to co-sponsoring with INSTRAW the workshop "Women, Water Supply and Sanitation" to be presented in Beijing.

79. A Board member commented on the unbalanced distribution of the Institute's work in different regions and mentioned the lack of activities conducted in Arab countries. In this connection, the Acting Director stated that until now, in

many cases, INSTRAW had responded to specific requests rather than taking initiatives based on a research strategy, in many cases because of the limited financial resources. She reiterated that it was obviously easier and less expensive to conduct pilot and other studies in the host country than in Arab ones, where language was a real impediment, as INSTRAW's working languages were English, French and Spanish, although Arabic, Chinese and Russian were also official languages of the United Nations. She pointed out the need for careful consideration and finding adequate financial solutions in all cases.

80. The President of the Board recommended that the Institute should update public information reports on its activities annually or biennially. She also acknowledged that financial constraints set limitations to INSTRAW's capacity to fully carry out its mandate. However, she indicated that there was a need to keep a systematic work guideline rather than to respond to specific demands. INSTRAW should, on the one hand, develop a clear vision of priorities for the coming years, and on the other hand be flexible enough to react to new possibilities of research and training. To this end, a research and training committee of knowledgeable persons in the field of women's studies should be set up to advise the Institute.

81. The representative of the International Training Centre of the ILO referred to the proposed international conference which was presented in document INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.4. In this connection, she suggested that INSTRAW and the Centre coordinate the organization of the conference and mentioned that the Centre could host that activity. In preparation for it, INSTRAW could make an inventory of research and training activities within the United Nations system. A definition of networking and possible future collaboration between agencies and a plan of action could be drawn. She also suggested that donors should be invited to the conference to improve interaction between donors and INSTRAW. This suggestion and offer was welcomed by the Board.

82. One Board member reiterated that the proposition of holding this conference should be presented as a concrete proposal at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

IV. CONTRIBUTION OF INSTRAW TO THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

83. The Acting Director introduced document INSTRAW/BT/1995/INF/1, "INSTRAW and the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations: INSTRAW's contribution". She referred to the INSTRAW/UNIFEM brochure, "Women and the United Nations 1945-1995". At the Acting Director's request, the public information assistant provided a brief description of the programme. She mentioned that the Institute was preparing activities at different levels, of which the above-mentioned leaflet was an example at the international level. At the national level, she explained that INSTRAW was part of an inter-agency committee of United Nations organizations to coordinate activities for the fiftieth anniversary, to take place in the Dominican Republic. Those activities would include holding an educational exhibit in connection with the "global teach-in" about the United Nations, the organization of concerts, and the possible issuance of a commemorative postage stamp.

84. The Acting Director said that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations provided a very good opportunity for reflection on its future role, with due consideration for the principles stated in its Charter. With that aim, the Institute was organizing a series of colloquia on topics such as the impact of new technologies (as those applicable in the agricultural sector, water, waste management, textiles, communications, biotechnology) on women's life; new structures on trade; national and international credit systems; ethical questions through mass media; emerging social changes, such as new patterns of migration, resettlements, refugees, and increasing unemployment.

V. REVIEW OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT INTERGOVERNMENTAL DECISIONS RELATED TO INSTRAW AND THE PROPOSED STRONGER INTERACTION WITH CEDAW, THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, THE DIVISION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN, UNIFEM AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS; PLANS OF INTERACTION OF INSTRAW AND UNIFEM AFTER 1995

85. The Board had before it document INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.3 which was introduced by the Acting Director. She pointed out that the item was envisaged by the fourteenth session of the Board in April 1994, and prepared prior to the discussions undertaken at the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. She stated that the difficulty in discussing the item lay in the fact that the state of the negotiations in the Commission had not reached a consensus on the draft Platform for Action and had not addressed the proposed "stronger interaction". However, a Board member suggested that despite the limitations, matters related to the future role of INSTRAW must be discussed under this item.

86. The representative of UNIFEM informed the Board that the new Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported and promoted a new approach incorporating a gender perspective within the concept of sustainable human development. She referred to the fact that there had been an earlier mention of the difficult situation that UNIFEM was undergoing and explained that the reasons were multiple, including inadequate resources in face of increasing demands, inappropriate systems, and some mismanagement. The crisis had manifested itself in an over-commitment of resources for 1995 and 1996. She expressed the wish of open future possibilities for cooperation. She also referred to an INSTRAW/UNIFEM collaboration, the joint publication Women at the United Nations 1945-1995 prepared on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

87. The representative of the host country brought to the attention of the Board the opinion of the Dominican Government regarding the manner in which the issue of the INSTRAW/UNIFEM merger had been handled. She recalled that General Assembly resolution 48/111 of December 1993 established very clearly what was required, namely, that the Secretary-General's report to the Economic and Social Council should be submitted through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). However, she explained the surprise of her Government that the requested report had not reached the ACABQ in time to be reviewed before the 1994 substantive session of the Council.

88. Referring to General Assembly resolution 49/160, she pointed out that in paragraph 6 the Assembly had asked the Commission on the Status of Women to review the matter and present its opinion. However, that was not done because the only report submitted as a background document to the Commission was document A/49/217 of 7 July 1994, and the ACABQ report (A/49/365, 7 September 1994) was not available. She considered it important that all Board members understood why her Government was taking such a stand. She reminded the Board that there was a legal agreement with the host country and that the legal implications of breaking such an agreement should be given full consideration. Moreover, the Dominican Government considered that it had not been duly consulted on the legal implications. She reiterated that the Board was entitled to know the reasons behind her Government's position in the way in which the proposed merger was dealt with.

89. The Representative of the Secretary-General explained that the report of the Secretary-General mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/111 had been submitted to the Economic and Social Council through ACABQ, as requested by the Assembly. The report was issued on 7 July 1994; ACABQ was, however, able to review it only on 2 September 1994. Consequently, the Council had considered the report of the Secretary-General, together with the report of ACABQ, at its resumed substantive session on 3 November 1994. While the stock of copies of the ACABQ report was insufficient for a new circulation to the Commission, that report had been made available to all Missions through the regular distribution channels and had been distributed to delegations on the occasion of the resumed session of the Council. He added that the Secretary-General's report, which had been before both the Council and the Commission, dealt clearly with the legal implications of the proposal.

90. The representative of the International Training Centre of the ILO brought to the attention of the Board the fact that INSTRAW and the Centre had been active partners in the development of training materials based on the principle that both organizations had a comparative advantage: INSTRAW with its expertise in research, and the Centre with its expertise in training methodologies and development of training materials which gave an added value to the final product. She described the activities of the Centre and gave a brief history of the partnership between INSTRAW and the Centre, which had resulted in the production of a series of training packages on women, water supply and sanitation; women and new and renewable sources of energy; and, women, environmental management and sustainable development.

91. She extended on behalf of the Director of the Centre an invitation to the Acting Director to visit the Turin Centre in 1995. She mentioned that a draft memorandum of understanding between INSTRAW and the ILO/Turin Centre was currently under discussion and that it was hoped that it would be signed before summer 1995.

92. The representative of the INSTRAW focal point in Cuba reiterated the support for keeping the headquarters of INSTRAW in a developing country, thus closer to the reality that women confronted every day. She said that women in developing countries really needed all kinds of transformations to improve their condition and their situation. She expressed preoccupation with the arguments

presented as background for the proposed merger and emphasized the need for strengthening all United Nations institutions dealing with women's concerns.

93. The representative of ECLAC pointed out that the most recent session of the Commission on the Status of Women proved that there were new conceptual gaps and that INSTRAW could play an important role in filling these gaps.

94. The representative of ECA noted that the Secretary-General had issued instructions for improving the status of women in the Secretariat in order to increase their visibility. Along these lines, she considered that the institutions and structures for women's issues in the United Nations should also be strengthened. She mentioned that African women were advocating a movement from the concept of women in development to gender in development. In this regard it was important to clearly define the concept of gender, which would require research to expound the meaning of the concepts before they were made concrete in policies. INSTRAW played a key role in this matter, she added.

95. The Acting Director said that new social, economic and political terminology related to women's situation was emerging, and the need to prepare a comprehensive glossary of terms to be used as a reference was becoming evident. INSTRAW could undertake some initiatives in that direction.

96. The Acting Director brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees the fact that INSTRAW's report was considered only under the Third Committee of the General Assembly, under agenda item "Advancement of women: report of the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women". The Acting Director emphasized that that situation limited the Institute's capacity to provide the corresponding General Assembly committees with substantive contributions and research findings in critical areas of economic and social development processes, such as: water, environment and sustainable development, waste management, renewable sources of energy, human settlements, poverty alleviation, desertification, international migration, and violence against women migrant workers.

97. She pointed out that if those critical limitations were to be overcome, INSTRAW should report under relevant agenda items of the Second and Third Committees in order to improve the coordination and synergy of its programmes. The President of the Board suggested that the Board should consider formulating a recommendation on the matter.

VI. INSTRAW FOCAL POINTS

98. The Acting Director introduced documents INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.6 and INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.6/Add.1, explaining the functions of the focal points as stipulated in the INSTRAW mandate, article II, paragraph 2, as well as actions taken during 1994, proposals for activating focal points and actions needed to be taken by the Board. Furthermore, she explained to the Board that during the regional preparatory meeting for ECE, informal consultations, as well as a press conference (19 October 1994), were held by INSTRAW's focal points in the ECE region, who requested that one or two focal points from each region be invited

to attend the Board meeting, and they recommended that focal points from Canada, Cuba, Italy and Sri Lanka be invited.

99. The Acting Director stated that the idea behind the focal points network was that INSTRAW would serve as a bridge between the research and analysis structures and the official decision-making process, doing this in cooperation with the regional commissions. However, some problems due to logistical situations, insufficiency of resources, geographical distances within a country and telecommunications limitations made it difficult for many focal points to adequately organize and promote their activities. She suggested that the Board consider the establishment of a network of focal points that could provide geographic coverage as well as addressing thematic priorities.

100. At the request of the Acting Director, the staff member in charge of the focal point programme outlined the main points of the document. Those included a need to reactivate focal points by requesting regular feedback from them; the possibility of having more than one focal point per country; and the establishment of a coordinating focal points system at the regional level. She also mentioned the continuous requests for funding made by some focal points.

101. The President of the Board pointed out that the focal points needed to receive clear instructions of what their role was, especially if they were expected to assist in the distribution of documents and organization of activities. She further mentioned that if they were to provide feedback, they should be able to receive an analysis of such feedback in a timely manner.

102. At the request of the President of the Board, the Acting Director explained the procedures followed in the nomination of focal points. Afterwards she suggested that the Board members take the initiative to promote a better interaction among the focal points in their respective regions.

103. A few Board members expressed concern about possible problems that might arise if two or more focal points were nominated in the same country. To this end, the Board encouraged the Institute to develop a system of coordination and cooperation in work implementation of the focal points and to establish correspondents wherever required, in all regions, in accordance with its Statute.

104. A number of Board members asked about the procedure to consider when approving two or more supporting focal points in a country, notwithstanding that focal points had to be nominated by the corresponding ministry of foreign affairs.

105. A Board member pointed out that INSTRAW focal points could be classified into two categories: those that would function in collecting information for INSTRAW and disseminating INSTRAW's information, and those who would represent INSTRAW in seminars and other events.

106. Some Board members expressed concern about the follow-up mechanisms of the need to activate certain focal points. The evaluation of their performance was also raised.

107. Some Board members agreed that a regional network of focal points could be established in a democratic way and could assist INSTRAW in training programmes and seminars within the region. The President of the Board pointed out that INSTRAW needed to establish a procedure on these cases.

108. Another Board member also suggested that research and training activities conducted by focal points should be considered useful for INSTRAW.

109. A Board member explained that the focal point in her country no longer existed, and sought clarification on the procedural steps for terminating relationships with non-existing focal points.

110. The representative of the focal point in Cuba expressed her appreciation for having attended the meeting. She pointed out that there was a need to widen the network and that a more flexible process for the selection of focal points, depending on the characteristics of each one, should be examined. She explained the functions of INSTRAW's focal point in her country, and the wide range of research and training activities they were undertaking.

111. The representative of ECLAC raised three issues concerning the establishment of focal points: procedural; the role of INSTRAW's focal points in Latin America; and the need to define the real purpose of focal points and what should be expected of them.

112. The representative of ECA stressed the importance of clarifying the functions of focal points. She informed the Board that in May or June 1995, ECA would have a leadership forum for Africa in Kampala, Uganda, and extended the invitation to the Acting Director of INSTRAW to participate at this forum in order to promote INSTRAW's possible joint programming with ECA following the Platform for Action.

113. The Acting Director stated that the Institute was an intergovernmental and autonomous institution dealing with women's issues and reporting directly to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, which was the background for governmental nominations of focal points. She stated the need to evaluate the functions of the focal points, as well as the relationship of mutual benefit to both institutions. Focal points should be able to evaluate INSTRAW's capacity in responding to their requirements.

114. The President of the Board read a fax sent by the United States Council for INSTRAW regarding a letter sent by non-governmental organizations from Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia on the establishment of a regional committee called "Supporters of INSTRAW Programme in Westnis" (grouping the countries in Europe and Eastern Asia of the former USSR). The main goals of this professional association of friends of INSTRAW are: to establish, maintain and manage research studies and statistics on women's advancement; to study the impact of the economy and social life on women in the Westnis region: to respond to the needs of women's groups by providing communication and information services, training and workshops, and to facilitate women's international participation by carrying out joint programmes focusing on women's advancement.

115. The Acting Director explained that the United States Council for INSTRAW had prepared a summary report containing 11 regional initiatives undertaken by the Council under its "priorities 1995 programme" during 1994-1995, to be presented for consideration and possible inclusion in the United States national report to the Fourth World Conference on Women. Some of the priority programmes included environment, political empowerment, human rights, education, training, violence against women, refugee and migrant women and women workers.

116. She welcomed ECLAC's proposal to clarify the roles and functions of the focal points, as well as the issue of funding focal points activities, aspects that should be analysed for the next biennium of the INSTRAW programme budget. She pointed out that INSTRAW would prepare more concrete proposals for the next session of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees.

117. The Board approved by acclamation the nomination of two new focal points: "Centre d'études de promotion et d'information sur le developpement social" in Burkina Faso; and the national centre for women "Nationaal Centrum voor de Vrouw-NCV" in Suriname.

VII. STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

118. For the deliberations on document INSTRAW/BT/1995/CRP.1, the Board decided to consider this agenda item in a closed session; therefore, only the following recommendation is reflected in this part of the report.

119. The Board recommended unanimously that the contract of the Acting Director should be extended at least until the end of February 1996 in order to secure the preparations of the next session of the Board in early 1996.

VIII. REVISION OF INSTRAW FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY SITUATION

120. The President of the Board stated that INSTRAW's biennial budget was already approved in 1994, and for 1995 only a revision of the estimated financial requirements for the carrying-out of the year's activities was actually necessary.

121. The Board expressed concern on the implications affecting INSTRAW's staff as a result of vacancies of senior posts in the various units, particularly as it pertained to the current situation of the post of Chief of Administration, which salary was still on INSTRAW's payroll in addition to the cost of the subsequent consultancies required for its substitution. The Board requested that the matter be urgently resolved and INSTRAW be compensated accordingly.

122. The Administration Unit introduced the financial revision contained in INSTRAW/BT/1995/CRP.2, reflecting estimates in line with the programme budget approved during the Board Meeting of 1994. The document included tables and financial analyses reporting on contributions received, expenditures incurred and outstanding obligations for the year 1994. The administrative officer stressed that out of the available resources, a US$ 1 million reserve must be maintained in the trust fund to secure the Institute's forthcoming operations.

123. Included in the estimated budget for 1995, and in line with the recommendation of the Strategic Planning Committee, additional funds for INSTRAW's activities at the Fourth World Conference on Women have been secured. In addition, corresponding resources have been estimated for the acquisition and updating of the computer equipment of the Institute, as well as the installation of an electronic mail system, which will reduce considerably INSTRAW's communication costs. This matter was also one of the issues considered at the Strategic Planning Committee meeting last January.

124. The Acting Director presented a revised budget and work programme (see annex I). The proposed activities were designed in line with the overall programme of work approved by the Board for the biennium 1994-1995, but taking into consideration the availability of time, human and financial resources. While preparing the estimates, priority was given to the completion of activities already initiated, as well as those relating to INSTRAW's participation and contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women.

125. The Board took note of the fact that the revised budget and work programme of activities presented by the Acting Director did not exceed the financial requirements as reflected in INSTRAW/BT/1995/CRP.2/Rev.1. It also noted that the Acting Director's proposal maintained a fund level that secured the US$ 1 million reserve required in the trust fund. Based on the supplementary documentation presented by the Acting Director, the Board approved the work programme and the reallocation of the financial resources, given that the requirements were within the overall ceiling approved by the Board under the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

126. The representative of DDSMS commended the presentation of the budget financial situation contained in document INSTRAW/BT/1995/CRP.2/Rev.1 and indicated that requests made by the Acting Director on budgetary and personnel issues should be supported subject to the agreement of the Office of Human Resources Management.

127. Furthermore, the representative of DDSMS stated that the current financial situation of INSTRAW demanded that major efforts be made by the Acting Director, with the assistance of the Board members, to ensure that the level of contribution for research and training in 1995 and succeeding years be substantially increased. He also suggested that the report of the Board should reflect a clear appeal to donor countries ensuring that the continuous flow of contributions was maintained.

128. The President of the Board stated that it was evident that all Board members should undertake fund-raising activities in their own countries and world wide. She concluded that she would continue her endeavour in pursuing the increase of the Netherlands contribution to the Institute.

129. The Acting Director expressed INSTRAW's appreciation that the contribution made by the Government of the Netherlands for 1994 was maintained at the same level as in previous years. A similar acknowledgement was expressed in regard to the contribution made by the Government of Italy.

130. She suggested that consideration be given towards providing a cushion to offset currency conversion and some provisions to undertake fund-raising activities and to negotiate contributions made to the Institute in national currencies.

131. The Board welcomed the appointment of the Acting Director, and welcomed the decisions and actions taken by her since 1 January 1995.

132. The Board members did not support the reclassification of posts in the Professional category, emphasizing the recommendations made by the Strategic Planning Committee at the meeting last January, which mandated the immediate filling of vacancies at INSTRAW. The Board decided that the staffing table of INSTRAW should remain as approved in the original programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. It asked that due flexibility should be exercised in the filling of vacant posts, as required by the Institute's work programme.

133. The Board strongly recommended that the contracts of all INSTRAW staff, including that of the Acting Director, be extended at least until after the next Board meeting in February 1996.

134. In addition, the Board unanimously supported the recommendation of the Acting Director to initiate the necessary action with the Office of Human Resources and Management (OHRM) for the establishment at INSTRAW of three national officer posts, and for the reclassification of local posts, which include two G-6 posts to G-7, as reflected in document INSTRAW/BT/1995/CRP.2/Rev.1.

135. The Acting Director requested the Board to favourably consider undertaking all the necessary provisions to solve the logistical arrangements to ensure an appropriate participation of INSTRAW at the non-governmental organizations' Forum on Women and the Fourth World Conference on Women, including an advance preparatory mission.

136. The Acting Director suggested that INSTRAW's delegation to the Conference be composed of the President of the Board, the Acting Director and at least three staff members. Regarding INSTRAW's participation in the Forum, the Board should consider the participation of two staff members for each of the four panels that INSTRAW will be conducting at the Forum. In addition, qualified interns who have been involved in the work of INSTRAW may also form part of the Institute's delegation, at their own expense and initiative.

137. The Board approved the composition of INSTRAW's delegations to the Conference and to the Forum, subject to relevant directives.

1. Conclusions

138. The Board welcomed the appointment of the Acting Director until the end of 1995 and the action taken by her as Acting Director of INSTRAW since 1 January 1995. The Board recommended the extension of her appointment, as well as all other INSTRAW staff, at least until after the next Board meeting, in

order not to jeopardize preparations for the sixteenth session of the Board of Trustees.

139. The Board urged the Acting Director to initiate the process for the appointment, as soon as possible, of the Chief of Research and Training; the Chief of Information, Communication, and Documentation, and the Chief of Administration and Finance. The Board asked that flexibility be exercised in filling these and other vacancies to implement the programmes of INSTRAW.

140. The Board expressed serious concerns about the drain on resources by the continued encumbrance of a former P-5 post, and the subsequent consultancies in the administrative section of the Institute, and requested that the matter be resolved in an urgent manner and that INSTRAW be compensated accordingly. The P-5 post in the administrative section should be retained at the same level by INSTRAW.

141. The Board recommended the strengthening and upgrading of the New York Liaison Office to facilitate cooperation between INSTRAW, other United Nations agencies and donor countries.

142. To enhance the fund-raising capacity of the Institute, all Board members are encouraged to assist the efforts of the Acting Director in raising funds for the Institute. In this connection, the Board suggested enlisting the valuable assistance of the Secretary-General in gaining the support of Governments and agencies to raise the necessary funding to enable the Institute to effectively carry out its mandate.

143. The Board approved the proposal to request of the Office of Human Resources Management the application of the national officers' scale to three posts for qualified personnel of the Institute. Furthermore, the grade and salaries of all local staff should be reviewed and upgraded, where appropriate.

144. The Board also approved that the facilities of INSTRAW should be modernized and upgraded, particularly in the area of data processing, communication and printing equipment, including the installation of E-mail and Internet systems, and CD-ROM of the work of the Institute. This was aimed at broadening the promotion of INSTRAW's work and increasing its visibility.

145. The Board took into consideration the human and financial resources in the approved budget to ensure and secure an effective implementation of INSTRAW's work plan, with due consideration to the flow of voluntary contributions into the Institute's Trust Fund. The Board approved that adequate allocation of financial resources be made so as to ensure INSTRAW's participation at the Conference.

146. The Board advised the Acting Director of the Institute to devise new possible schemes for marketing and disseminating INSTRAW's publications beyond the existing distribution mechanisms, to extend their outreach to a greater number of research institutions, universities and other outlets.

147. The Board noted with appreciation the new format of the report on the financial and budgetary status presented by the Acting Director, and

approved the revised budgetary allocations for 1995 contained in INSTRAW/BT/1995/CRP.2/Rev.1, as amended during the meeting.

IX. OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO THE FUNCTIONING OF THE INSTITUTE

148. The first part of the time allocated to this agenda item was dedicated to the presentation of the new multimedia modular training package, Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development as presented in paragraphs 70 to 73 of document INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.2. The Acting Director explained that this training package was prepared in collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO. She pointed out that the training manual consisted of five substantive parts: Implementation of Agenda 21, INSTRAW and the United Nations system activities; Women and environmental health; Women as agents of change in the development sector; Women as managers of the environment; and Women, environmental indicators and capacity-building programme. The staff member of INSTRAW responsible for the preparation of the overall structure, the substantive content and target groups, also presented to the Board the cost-estimates for translation of the package into Spanish and French as well as the costs for reproduction and dissemination. The representative of the International Training Centre of the ILO elaborated on the multimedia modular training methodology and the systematic approach to training conceived for this material and explained the composition of the package.

149. The Board members appraised the new training package Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development and recommended considering allocations of financial resources for translation and dissemination of the package.

150. In considering agenda item 10, the Acting Director introduced document INSTRAW/BT/1995/INF/3 and brought to the attention of the Board various invitations received by INSTRAW from the United Nations system to contribute and participate in various meetings, from academic and non-governmental institutions and from joint programmes with research centres, as well as several requests made by local and some international non-governmental organizations for financial support. Nevertheless, some Board members expressed concern about INSTRAW's participation in meetings or programme activities due to budgetary conditions.

151. The President and the Board members expressed their appreciation to the Acting Director for making INSTRAW more visible and noted that further action in this area should be undertaken according to the priority areas approved for INSTRAW's programme of work.

152. A few Board members requested more information and further clarification on the scope of possible cooperation with the institutions mentioned in the document under consideration.

153. The Acting Director brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees the need for an editorial panel and a reviewers panel, as well as a publication advisory panel for INSTRAW's material. These panels could be composed by one member of the Strategic Planning Committee, who could be the current President

of the Board, one Board Member willing to accept this task and three or four well-known researchers.

154. Some Board members strongly recommended changing the present format of INSTRAW News and improving the quality of the articles. The Board also recommended that for each INSTRAW publication a budget for translation and printing should be allocated.

155. Regarding INSTRAW's liaison office in New York, whose main task is to serve as support to all INSTRAW activities in the United Nations, the Acting Director expressed her gratitude to the professional staff members for undertaking various assignments. She also pointed out that the office space and equipment were not adequate for efficient representation and for all INSTRAW activities, despite the high rent being paid.

156. The Board recommended that INSTRAW's liaison office in New York be upgraded.

X. DATE OF THE NEXT SESSION OF THE BOARD

157. On this item the Acting Director explained that in order to agree to a concrete date for the Board of Trustees session, the following factors should be considered: (a) INSTRAW's biennial programme; (b) that the budgetary-fiscal regular United Nations calendar was 1 January to 31 December; (c) that the United Nations Pledging Conference regularly took place in November every year, when Member States announced their contributions for the following year. Therefore, the boards of various United Nations bodies and agencies were usually organized six months prior to the following budget year. Notwithstanding, INSTRAW Board of Trustees met in February or in April to approve the programme and budget of the current biennium. Referring to the various comments made during the discussions of several agenda items, she stressed that the date of the next session of the Board should be analysed in connection with the preparations of the substantive work programme and budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

158. A Board member suggested that the Strategic Planning Committee Meeting should take place immediately after the Conference in Beijing, in order to analyse the outcome and prepare the programme of work and budget to be presented and approved by the Board at the very beginning of next year. The Board agreed that the next session should take place as early as possible in 1996.

XI. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE BOARD ON ITS FIFTEENTH SESSION

159. At its eighth meeting, on 28 April 1995, the Board adopted the report on its fifteenth session (INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.7 and Add.1-11).

XII. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Opening and duration of the session

160. The fifteenth session of the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW was held at the Institute's headquarters from 24 to 28 April 1995. The Board held eight meetings.

161. The session was opened by Els Postel-Coster in her capacity as President of the Board. In welcoming the members of the Board, she noted that the session was taking place at a critical moment for INSTRAW. She expressed that the deliberations should consider how its work could be best enhanced in the future. She pointed out that there would be no sustainable development, no end to the violation of human rights, no stabilization of the world population and no equality, as long as women's concerns were marginalized in the mainstream of political and economic development policies. Therefore, INSTRAW would have to reconsider its working programme in the light of those developments and also in relation to the Fourth World Conference on Women. She expressed her gratitude to the Acting Director for all the tasks she had undertaken and achieved since her appointment.

162. The representative of the Secretary-General, Ji Chaozhu, addressed the Board. He expressed his pleasure in representing the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the fifteenth session of INSTRAW's Board of Trustees and reiterated the Secretary-General's appreciation to the Government of the Dominican Republic. He pointed out that the Secretary-General's message to the world community on the occasion of the International Women's Day, delivered at the World Summit for Social Development, had emphasized the need for women to realize their full rights and potential if solutions to the world social, economic and political problems were to be achieved with any measure of success. He recalled that women's concerns had been at the centre of many of the global conferences, such as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development; the World Conference on Human Rights; the International Conference on Population and Development; and the United Nations World Summit for Social Development. He indicated that the wide recognition of the empowerment of women was a central factor in addressing macro-development issues such as population; environmental sustainability; poverty alleviation; human development; food scarcity; energy and urbanization.

163. The representative of the Secretary-General highlighted INSTRAW's work in the area of statistics, time-use study, including women's unpaid work in national accounts and statistics, and for the integration of it into national and global economies. He stressed the importance of INSTRAW's programme on water and enhancing the role and participation of women in the management of water supplies. In that connection, he pointed out that in cooperation with DDSMS, a joint training seminar had been organized in Namibia. He also expressed the interest of DDSMS to work together with INSTRAW in the organization of training seminars on women, environmental management and sustainable development.

164. He pointed out that the proposal for the merger between INSTRAW and UNIFEM would be discussed at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly following the

Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing. In that respect, he emphasized that whatever the ultimate result of the deliberations might be, the Institute's role and mandate would continue to hold a very important place in the development arena.

165. An opening statement was made by Jacqueline Malagón, Minister of Education of the Dominican Republic and ex officio member of the Board representing the host country. On behalf of her Government, she welcomed the Board and emphasized the importance that her Government attached to the proposed merger of INSTRAW and UNIFEM. She brought to the attention of the Board resolution 95/10 of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, adopted by the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board on 6 April 1995 in New York, which referred to the administrative and financial situation of UNIFEM. Upon reading the resolution she concluded that it gave a totally new perspective on the situation of the proposal for merger and that, therefore, the merger was inadmissible.

166. In the statement submitted by the Minister, she highlighted the legal basis for the establishment of INSTRAW by quoting the relevant General Assembly and Council resolutions. She pointed out that the proposed institutional reforms to the United Nations institutions dealing with the advancement of women should be an integral part of the general reform of the United Nations, as well as of the Economic and Social Council and the other organs of the system, since their initial mandate would have to deal with the issues of economic, social and cultural development and peace building.

167. In concluding, Ms. Malagón welcomed all the Board members to the Dominican Republic especially those who were attending for the first time. She requested that her oral statement be published as an annex, following the practice initiated in 1994. (See annex II.)

168. In her statement the Acting Director pointed out that, even at risk of constant repetition, women and men should participate on an equal basis in every sector of economic and social activity. An appraisal of the major accomplishments achieved in the area of the advancement of women since the formal establishment of INSTRAW by General Assembly resolution 3520 (XXX) of 15 December 1975, showed that much was still to be obtained in the area of research and training, particularly on the impact of science and technology in women's daily life, and in the translation of accumulated existing knowledge into policy decisions, and on the efficiency of the institutions in promoting sustainable development.

169. The Acting Director highlighted that true development and democracy would be a reality when meaningful participation was extended to all sectors of the population. She stated in addition that obvious differences exist in opportunities and individual skills and abilities, as well as in cultural practices and perceptions. Those could constitute serious limitations to democratic development, unless appropriate stimulus and incentives were applied. She added that there was sufficient evidence to prove that cultural diversity and interaction among peoples constituted rich synergism for progress.

B. Attendance

170. The following members of the Board attended the session: Ihsan Abdalla Algabshawi (Sudan), Selma Acuner (Turkey), Fatima Benlismane Hassar (Morocco), Pilar Escario Rodriguez-Spiteri (Spain), Aída González Martínez (Mexico), Noelie Kangoye (Burkina Faso), Amara Pongsapich (Thailand), Els Postel-Coster (the Netherlands), Gail Saunders (Bahamas), Renata Siemienska-Zochowska (Poland) and Sudarsono (Indonesia).

171. The following ex officio members of the Board attended: the representative of the Secretary-General (Under-Secretary-General, Department for Development Support and Management Services); the representative of the host country (Dominican Republic); representatives of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); the representative of the Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC); and the Acting Director.

172. The Director of the Division of Public Administration and Development Management of the United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services, as well as representatives of the International Training Centre of the ILO, UNDP, UNIFEM and UNICEF attended the session.

173. A representative from the INSTRAW focal point in Cuba, Federación de Mujeres Cubanas (FMC), was also present at the session.

C. Election of officers

174. At its first meeting, in accordance with rule 7 of its rules of procedure, the Board re-elected the following officers by acclamation:

President: Els Postel-Coster (The Netherlands)

Vice-President: Fatima Hassar (Morocco)

Rapporteur: Ihsan Abdalla Algabshawi (Sudan).

D. Agenda

175. At its first meeting the Board adopted the following agenda (INSTRAW/BT/1995/INF/2/Add.1) by consensus:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Election of officers.
4. Draft Platform for Action - Beijing 1995.
5. Meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee: implementation of the recommendations.

6. Progress report by the Acting Director, with special attention to the preparations of activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing.

7. Review of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, and the budgetary situation in light of the Pledging Conference; staffing arrangements of the Institute.

8. Implications of recent intergovernmental decisions related to INSTRAW and the proposed stronger interaction with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Commission on the Status of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and UNIFEM; plans of interaction of INSTRAW and UNIFEM after 1995.

8a. Follow-up action after the Fourth World Conference on Women.

9. INSTRAW and the United Nations fiftieth anniversary: INSTRAW's contribution.

10. INSTRAW focal points.

11. Other matters related to the functioning of the Institute.

12. Date of next Board session.

13. Adoption of the report of the session.

E. Closing remarks

176. The President of the Board, Professor Els Postel-Coster, expressed positive appreciation and gratitude for the presence of Mr. Ji Chaozhu, as representative of the Secretary-General: "We take it as an indication to the value attached to this Institute at the highest level of the United Nations Secretariat, and we asked Mr. Guido Bertucci, just before his departure to convey to the Secretary-General our positive appreciation for the attention paid to INSTRAW, and also transmit to him the high expectations we have on his future support. If INSTRAW, in spite of a period of extreme trial and affliction is still going strong and is still able to present an impressive list of initiatives and activities, it is no doubt thanks to the extraordinary dynamic approach and dedication of the Acting Director, Mrs. Martha Dueñas-Loza. It is perhaps not an exaggeration to state that she saved the life of INSTRAW by her leadership in this stressful period".

Notes

1/ National Training Seminar on Women, Water Supply and Sanitation, Windhoek, 20-25 November 1994: report distributed to the Board. Women, Water Supply and Sanitation. Training Seminar, Georgetown, 31 January-4 February 1994: report is available. National Training Workshop on Women, Water Supply and Sanitation, Quito, 27 June-1 July: report in preparation.

Annex I

REVISED BUDGET AND WORK PROGRAMME: PROPOSALS OF THE ACTING DIRECTOR BEFORE THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF INSTRAW

To: All the Members of the Board

Conference room paper CRP/2 presents a revision of INSTRAW budget on the basis of the programmes of activities as originally approved during the XIV Session of INSTRAW Board of Trustees, under the PROGRAMME BUDGET for the biennium 1994-1995 (INSTRAW/BT/1994/R.3).

After a careful assessment of the current financial situation of INSTRAW, as well as the commitments it is compelled to meet in order to successfully carry out its programme of activities during the current year, and in compliance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/30, I am herewith presenting a proposal for the reformulation of the Institute programme implementation for 1995 in accordance with paragraph 111 of the report presented by INSTRAW's Board of Trustees during the resumed session of the Economic and Social Council, held in New York in November 1994 (E/1994/68, 7 June 1994).

Priority has been focused on the activities related to INSTRAW participation and contribution at the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in September of this year. For this purpose, the conduct of several workshops and panels relevant to the fields of INSTRAW's past and current work have been envisaged within the present financial analysis. By the same token particular importance has been granted to the production of INSTRAW substantive publications and information material, which is intended to be produced in several languages (i.e. Arabic, Chinese). This output includes the production of a CD-ROM on the work of the Institute, aimed to broaden the promotion of INSTRAW's work and to enhance its visibility. A modest allocation for purchase of publications research material has also been estimated.

Significant consideration has also been given to the need to upgrade INSTRAW's data processing and communication equipment. In this respect the installation of an E-Mail and internet systems and the acquisition of a new switchboard/telephone equipment have been included in this budget estimate.

While preparing the exercise, due consideration was given to aspects such as realistic time-frames and the Institute availability to secure the human resources that would be required for the effective implementation of its work-plan. In addition, the flow of voluntary contributions into the Institute Trust Fund has been duly noted, while considering the financial implications resulting from the Institute potential initiatives and endeavours.

Please bear in mind that the present proposal would entail the deferment of unused financial resources originally allocated to other programme outputs which have not been implemented as of yet, and would need to be postponed. Therefore, your careful consideration to this proposed reformulation is of utmost importance.

Due attention should be drawn to the aspects that must be taken into account, such as the Trust Fund balance and contribution flow, while considering the biennial budget for period 1996-1997.

In this respect, it is essential that adequate funding be allocated for the reposition of office and general operating equipment, given the obsolete state of a significant portion of INSTRAW's inventory that must be disposed of.

By the same token, some areas of INSTRAW's building must undergo significant maintenance work and repairs. Furthermore, the office space available is in many cases inadequate, particularly in the areas assigned to the Research & Training Unit, Printing Shop, Library and Archives.

This matter should be given due consideration since the inoperative state of office equipment as well as the inadequate office space has a negative effect on the quality and efficiency of the overall output of the Institute.

Annex II

STATEMENT OF JACQUELINE MALAGÓN TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF INSTRAW AT ITS FIFTEENTH SESSION

Santo Domingo, 24 April 1995

On behalf of the Government of the Dominican Republic and in my capacity as representative of the host country of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees, I should like to welcome most cordially the representative of the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General Mr. Ji Chaozhu, the members of the Board and the observers who are here with us for this fifteenth session of the Board.

We are especially pleased to welcome the new members of the Board and would like to express to you, Madam President, our satisfaction at your assumption of the Presidency. We hope that your stay in Santo Domingo will be a very pleasant one indeed.

Madam President, I had prepared a statement for this first meeting of the Board of Trustees. However, on Friday, 14 April, we received news of the adoption of a resolution at an extraordinary meeting of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund (UNDP/UNFPA) which, to our way of thinking, is of fundamental importance and must be brought to your urgent attention. Consequently, we have decided to distribute the text of our statement and to read out the resolution of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund for the information of all of you. We have only the English text, as an official translation of the resolution has not yet been made. I apologize for reading the resolution in English. The text reads as follows:

"95/10. United Nations Development Fund for Women

The Executive Board,

1. Notes with deep concern the statement made by the Administrator and the Director to the second regular session of the Executive Board and expresses its deep concern over the serious financial and administrative situation in UNIFEM;

2. Notes the efforts undertaken to date by the Administrator and the Director to meet these concerns;

3. Requests the Administrator in cooperation with the Director and the Consultative Committee:

(a) To present as soon as possible a detailed analysis of the reasons for, the scope of and implications, at all levels, for UNIFEM and UNDP of the financial and administrative situation in UNIFEM, including an up-to-

date balance sheet of the Fund's finances and details of the operation of the Fund's operational reserve and guidelines governing access to it;

(b) To present as soon as possible a report on all the matters concerning steps taken to strengthen the financial, administrative and managerial oversight of UNIFEM, including UNDP's role in providing supervision and systems;

4. Decides that UNIFEM should re-examine the operations of the Fund including its administrative costs, and its commitments as presented to the Executive Board, including all its financial activities in relation to the Fourth World Conference on Women, and that UNIFEM should undertake all efforts to reduce the size and number of its commitments and disbursements in accordance with projected income and to report on these efforts to the Executive Board, bearing in mind the special responsibilities of UNIFEM with regard to the Fourth World Conference on Women;

5. Also decides, based on the information given to the Executive Board on the commitments and planned activities for the Fourth World Conference on Women of the Fund, that UNIFEM as of today shall not enter into any new commitments prior to the Executive Board deliberations on the issues contained in the documents requested above;

6. Requests the Administrator in cooperation with the Director to convene an informal meeting of the Executive Board in May 1995 at the latest, in order to provide a progress report of the aforementioned issues as well as a synopsis of the internal audit report;

7. Also requests the Administrator to inform the Board of Auditors of the Executive Board's wish that UNIFEM be included with priority in its current programme of work;

8. Decides to consider, at its annual session 1995, the terms of reference and means of financing for an external evaluation of the Fund;

9. Decides in the light of the above and awaiting the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women, to postpone consideration on the future direction of UNIFEM to the first regular session of 1996." a/

[The resolution was adopted by the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA on 7 April 1995.]

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a/ The text appears as it was read by Mrs. Malagón. Paragraph 3 (c) was omitted in the oral presentation. It reads:

"(c) To draw up a plan, without delay, which will put the Fund's finances, administration and management on a sound basis, including the possible need for Executive Board actions, and present it to the Executive Board at the annual session in 1995."

Madam President, distinguished members of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees, this resolution, which has not been circulated, completely changes the nature of the proposal to merge INSTRAW and UNIFEM. I will not dwell at any length on the whys and the wherefores which are obvious to everyone; we therefore consider such a merger more unacceptable than ever. Each one of you must arrive at his or her own conclusions and make appropriate recommendations. It is for you to take a position on this matter.

On behalf of the Government and people of the Dominican Republic, I should like finally to take this opportunity to wish you a pleasant stay in Santo Domingo and express my wishes for the success of this meeting. The traditional Dominican hospitality is celebrating your presence in Santo Domingo. Welcome.